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DEPARTMENT FOR NEA, S/CT, INR;  
NSC FOR ABRAMS/DORAN/MARCHESE/HARDING

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/18/2016

TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [LE](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: HARIRI ALLEGES THREAT OF SYRIAN NERVE GAS ATTACK  
AGAINST MARCH 14 FORCES OR UN

Classified By: Jeffrey Feltman, Ambassador, per 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (S) MP Saad Hariri passed via messenger threat information alleging that the Syrians are planning a nerve gas attack against either a UN or March 14 target in Lebanon during the month of September. The attack will be portrayed as an al-Qaida operation. According to the information, five Syrian sailors and 47 were wounded when some of the gas leaked in Tartous Port.

2. (S) The Ambassador has requested a meeting with Hariri to discuss his sourcing and whether he has shared this information with others (such as UN, UNIIIC, and UNIFIL officials). We also want to make sure that Hariri has shared this information with the GOL so that Lebanese army and other border officials will be vigilant regarding smuggling attempts. We will report septel Hariri's comments.

3. (S) We have copied the full text of the English-language message Hariri sent to us. Begin text:

Two weeks ago, Ship "Goy B" docked in Tartous Port and an incident led to the killing of five sailors, four of which were known while the fifth remained unidentified. Five bodies and 47 injured were sent to Al-Basil Hospital.

The new thing about this information is that two months ago, the Syrian military officials received material that was on the ship which docked in Tartous Port. It consisted of containers carrying chemical materials (colorless and odorless poisonous material). These materials killed the sailors after they dropped one of the containers which opened while they were trying to put it down.

The Syrian Army and the concerned authorities tried to hide the news of the arrival of these materials to Tartous Port and also the casualties that happened in the army units who were equipped with masks and special uniforms. This gas, i.e. the materials, attacks the nervous system and kills immediately everyone who inhales it.

According to the source, the ship arrived to Tartous Port three times this year carrying wood and iron materials and not containers. But the appearance of these containers was surprising and this explains the arrival of the army unit 116 which is in charge of managing the chemical war and is specialized in bacteriological weapons. The unit appeared in the port three times this year and it is certain that it was planning to transport these containers

The source asserts that some of these materials were moved -- and others will be moved -- and put in a warehouse in Naameh area with a group of Palestinians. These materials will be used in a big explosion that would occur in September and that would be traced back to al-Qaeda. This blast will target a United Nations quarter or a meeting for the March 14 forces, and there will be no survivals due to the great effectiveness of these materials which contain the Methane gas.

According to the source, this material will be used against both targets and in different timings. This material has not entered Lebanon yet because of the war that took place in Lebanon during the month of August and also due to the blockade that Israel imposed on the land crossings.

The source warns that these materials can enter under camouflage because they cannot be put in a tanker but they should be fixed on trucks or tankers, i.e. an iron box that is made especially for such a material. These boxes would be put on a truck that looks like a tanker after which the iron box will be destroyed.

This ship belongs to the Waheeb Company, partner of Maher Assad and Muder Assad. All the sailors that died were Syrians, one of them is Captain Ahmad Abdullah Bayazeed, and they didn't announce the fifth name. It was known from the source that he was a member of Army Unit 116 and was on board of the ship.

End text.

FELTMAN